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Commerce Will Suppress War.

In an address on the "Interdependence of Nations," given before the International Commercial Congress recently held at Philadelphia, Edward Atkinson spoke thus of the ethical principles controlling commerce and making it certain that international trade will ultimately suppress war:

My faith is firm in the power that makes for righteousness, and I believe the dawning century will witness the fruition of Kant's prophecy of eternal peace, when the beneficent force of commerce will suppress the hell of war.

On what grounds may it be held that the force of commerce will suppress war? We may assume that there is a power supreme which makes for righteousness and that the conduct of the work of this world must be governed by ethical principles. If there is no such power, then the reverse. What are the principles or rules of action governing the conduct of commerce? Probity, integrity, truth, a high standard of character, mutual trust and mutual service. What is the motive? Gain; not at the cost of others, but to mutual benefit. What is the service of commerce? To distribute the abundance of things necessary to human welfare; to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to house the homeless. It has been well said by Sir Henry Sumner Maine that the conception of trust on which credit rests, which gives life to commerce, is relatively modern. In the Homeric literature the cunning of Ulysses possessed as high a merit as the wisdom of Nestor or the courage of Achilles, but in the conduct of modern commerce such conditions have been developed in the relations of men to each other as to make it a truth sustained by observation that "the trust reposed in and deserved by the many creates the opportunity for the fraud of the few." At a moderate estimate of the value of the annual product of this country and the cost of its conversion from one form to another, and of its distribution through all its manifold phases, there is at least five hundred dollars' worth of trade, of bargain and sale every year, nine-tenths at least on credit, in order that each man, woman and child of our seventy-six million people may be fed, clothed and sheltered. It would not be worth a quarter of one per cent. or twenty-five cents on a hundred dollars to secure the guarantee even of the nation for the payment of these obligations substantially at the time when they become due. Neither banks nor merchants could pay a quarter per cent. for such a guarantee on all transactions. Aside from these purchases and sales of goods and wares, there are to be added the huge dealings resting on good faith, in stocks and bonds, in real estate, and for services of other kinds.

Reverse this picture. Admitting that high and noble qualities have been, are now, and will again be developed in the conduct of war; admitting that war in the defense of liberty is justifiable, sometimes necessary,—yet on what principles is the science of war now based? What motives of action govern the conduct of warfare even when directed by the men of highest repute? Is not the first precept to take advantage of the enemy at every point? In the conduct of a campaign must not the motive be to deceive the opponent, to mislead him, to learn about his movements by the use of spies? Is it

not necessary, in fact, to lie, to cheat, to ambush, to strike the enemy in the back or on the flank, to secure the gun or other instrument of carnage by which his forces may be slaughtered without power of defense on his part; often to destroy his property, to devastate his country, and by every evil method that would be thought dishonorable and fraudulent in commerce, to secure the ends that are sought in warfare? I challenge any one to deny the validity of these statements. They may be qualified, they may be palliated, they may be stated in less offensive words; but in their general terms such are the differences in precept and practice between the conduct of commerce and the conduct of war. It follows that to deny that as time goes on the hell of war will be suppressed by the service of commerce is to deny that God reigns.

New Books.

A HISTORY OF QUAKER GOVERNMENT IN PENNSYLVANIA. By Isaac Sharpless, president of Haverford College. Philadelphia: T. S. Leach & Co. Two vols., 12 mo., cloth. Price, \$1.50 per vol.

T. S. Leach & Co. of Philadelphia have just published the second volume of President Sharpless' "History of Quaker Government in Pennsylvania." The first volume was published in 1898 under the title, "A Quaker Experiment in Government." It treated the subject of what has been called William Penn's "Holy Experiment in Civil Government" in an original and critical way. President Sharpless, in addition to being a scholarly, painstaking and conscientious investigator, is peculiarly fitted for the treatment of the whole subject of the Quaker history of Pennsylvania, by having passed his life in the very region where this history was made. He has thus been able to grasp many phases of the subject which no investigator from a distance could ever do. In this second volume he has made a careful effort to give the real facts as to the position which the Friends took in the Revolutionary War, a subject which has been much commented on and much misunderstood. Dr. Sharpless does not attempt "either to defend or to condemn the position taken by the Friends of Pennsylvania during the Revolutionary War; but as accurately as possible, in the light of contemporary writings found in the records of meetings, private letters and public documents, to state that position fairly." These documents, with which the volume is so enriched, throw an immense flood of true light on the subject, and ought to enable any honest historian hereafter to form a correct and fair judgment of what the Friends of that time were and of the relation of their actions to the principles by which they were guided. If the novelists who have recently attempted to throw these Quaker doings into fiction would "read, ponder and inwardly digest" these documents of President Sharpless' book, we should have no more such hideous historical caricatures as some of those found, for instance, in "Hugh Wynne, Free Quaker." We commend President Sharpless' two volumes to all students of American history, for the subject which he so accurately treats is more than Quaker history. The Quakers, as Dr. Gregg says, were among the most important "makers of America."